

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the instant application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method of permitting a user to remain in contact with at least one other entity while the user is unavailable or unable to communicate directly with the at least one other entity, the method comprising:

subscribing a service by the user;

establishing by the user a contact list comprising the at least one other entity;

establishing by the user at least one service rule used for the service to contact ~~contacting~~ the at least one other entity, wherein the at least one service rule defines when and how the at least one other entity in the contact list is to be contacted, wherein the at least one service rule is user-customizable and is followed when attempting to reach the at least one other entity;

establishing by the user at least one contact rule used for the service to contact ~~contacting~~ the user after the at least one other entity has been contacted, wherein the at least one contact rule defines if, when, and how the user should be contacted;

when the user is unavailable to initiate contact or upon being activated by the user, the service automatically contacting each entity on the contact list and eliciting ~~the~~ specified information according to the at least one service rule;

obtaining the specified information from the at least one other entity; and

subsequently conveying the obtained information to the user if the at least one contact rule is satisfied.

2. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the contact list is a database and the contact list includes information selected from names, phone numbers, email addresses, pager numbers, and a combination thereof.

3. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the at least one service rule is selected from how to contact the at least one entity, what to ask the at least one entity, a time period to contact the at least one entity, and a combination thereof.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the contact list comprises at least two entities and the user is contacted after each of the at least two entities is contacted if the at least one contact rule has been satisfied.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the contact list comprises at least two entities and the user is contacted after all of the at least two entities is contacted if the at least one contact rule has been satisfied.

7-18. (Cancelled).